

3.8 LAND AND SHORELINE USE – Land Use Patterns

3.8.1 Affected Environment

Existing Land Use

Project Site

The approximately 117-acre site is located on a peninsula with Mats Mats Bay to the west, Mats Mats Channel to the north and Admiralty Inlet to the east. The site has been continuously mined since 1934. Mining-related facilities on the site include two primary (or “jaw”) crushers, a secondary portable plant, a grizzly plant, miscellaneous structures to store equipment and supplies, and two loading ramps. Approximately 61 acres, or approximately 52 percent of the site, has been disturbed and is currently in active mining or processing.

Site topography is generally defined by historic mining and reclamation activities. Lots 6 and 7 of Block 3 of the Basalt Beach plat (located just south of the boundary line between Section 33, Township 29 North and Section 4, Township 28 North) were previously mined and reclaimed by General Construction. The interior portion of the site contains varied topography, including quarry pits, reclaimed areas and unmined ridges. Elevations in the interior portion of the site range from approximately 110 feet above mean lower low water elevation (MLLW) to approximately 13 feet below MLLW. From the interior of the site, topography generally slopes down to the shorelines of Mats Mats Bay and Admiralty Inlet. The tallest shoreline slope, located along the northern edge of the site, is approximately 100 feet in height. Shoreline topography in the vicinity of the barge loading area along the eastern edge of the site slopes gently to the west and toward the interior of the site. There is no public access to the shoreline areas of the site.

Site Vicinity

The site is located in eastern Jefferson County on the western shoreline of Puget Sound. The land use character of the Mats Mats Bay vicinity can generally be characterized as rural residential with interspersed tracts of undeveloped second and third growth forest.

Figure 3.8-1 provides an aerial photograph illustrating land uses in the immediate vicinity of the quarry site. Land uses in the immediate site vicinity include large lot (rural) residential, small farms and undeveloped parcels. To the immediate south are rural residential uses along the eastern shore of Mats Mats Bay and along the shore of Admiralty Inlet – this area is rural residential in character and contains a residential density of approximately 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres (this area also contains numerous legal nonconforming parcels with lot sizes generally ranging from two to four acres in size). The homes to the south are the closest residential uses to the site. To the immediate west are Mats Mats Bay and the Mats Mats Bay Channel. Further to the west, across the bay and channel, are rural residences and undeveloped parcels. To the immediate north is the Mats Mats Bay Channel. Further to the north, across the channel, are rural residential uses. To the east and northeast is Admiralty Inlet.



Source: Nies Mapping Group, 1998



Mats Mats Quarry Final Environmental Impact Statement

Figure 3.8-1

Aerial Photograph

Views

Views to the site are afforded from the north, south and west, and from the water to the east. Views to the site from Bay Shore Drive and Bayview Drive, approximately 700 feet to the north across the channel, are primarily limited to the vegetated north shoreline slope – no views to the quarry area are afforded. Views to the site from McKeen Road approximately 1,000 feet to the northwest include some views of mining equipment (conveyor), stockpiles and vegetated northern shoreline slope.

From Oak Bay Road approximately 0.75 mile to the west, across Mats Mats Bay, views are of the western shoreline slope (a portion is heavily vegetated and a portion is lightly vegetated), the inner harbor and portions of mining equipment including a conveyor. To the west of Oak Bay Road and up the hill (Mats View Road), panoramic views of Mats Mats Bay, Puget Sound and Whidbey Island are afforded. Views to the site from this area include the inner harbor, the vegetated western shoreline slope and portions of mining equipment. The quarry floor cannot be seen from this area.

From Olympic Boulevard to the southeast, views to the site are obscured by vegetation and the quarry area is not visible. From Quarry Road to the immediate southwest of the site, views to the office, stockpile and extreme southern portion of the quarry floor are afforded.

3.8.2 Impacts of the Proposed Action

Land Use Patterns

The analysis in this section discusses the changes that could occur as a direct or indirect result of continued mining and reclamation under the updated permit. Direct impacts can generally include development of undeveloped lands, the loss of open space to more intensive uses, displacement of existing uses, possible conflicts between different types or densities of land uses, and changes in the character of an area. Indirect land use impacts are those that could be associated with peripheral development resulting from changes or intensification in land use at the project site. Cumulative impacts are those that could occur as a result of the proposal in combination with other foreseeable development.

The proposal is to continue mining and reclamation under a transferred and updated Surface Mining Reclamation Permit and in accordance with the site's designation as a Mineral Resource Area under both the Jefferson County Mineral Lands Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan. (See Section 3.9, *Relationship to Plans and Policies*, for discussion on the relationship of continued mining to applicable comprehensive plan policies, zoning designations and Shoreline Management Master Program policies.)

Continued mining activity would be located within the existing 61 acre mining footprint. No additional site clearing would be required. No added on-site or off-site mining support facilities are proposed. The continuation of mining would not be anticipated to change the existing land use character of the site and would not be expected to change the low-density residential and rural character of the area.

Continuation of the existing mining and reclamation activities would affect several different elements of the environment, including air quality, noise and traffic that could affect land uses in the vicinity of the site and these conditions would continue until approximately 2025 compared

to approximately 2007 without the *Proposed Action*. Impacts and mitigation measures associated with these various elements of the environment are discussed in the respective sections of this document.

There are no known development proposals in the site vicinity and cumulative impacts resulting from continued mining under the *Proposed Action* in combination with other planned development in the area are not anticipated.

Continued mining of the site's rock resource is not expected to generate significant indirect land use impacts. Uses of the type and scale proposed do not typically generate spin off uses; continued mining would not be expected, for example, to create a significant demand for commercial or residential uses to support and service planned operations or to house employees. Similarly, continued mining is not expected to generate cumulative adverse land use impacts or change the general character of the area.

Upon completion of mining and reclamation activities, the site could be developed consistent with the RR-5 zoning designation (one dwelling unit per five acres). Under the existing zoning, a maximum of 23 residential units could be developed on the site. Residential development proposed subsequent to site reclamation would be subject to separate permitting and environmental review.

Views

Views to the site are afforded from residences and roadways to the north, south and west, and from the water. Views to the existing quarry floor from areas to the west, north and east are effectively blocked by the existing 70 to 90 foot berms surrounding the quarry floor.

The *Proposed Action* would alter site topography by lowering the existing quarry floor footprint to an elevation of approximately 60 feet below MLLW. Because views to the quarry floor are generally blocked by the perimeter berms, view impacts resulting from proposed mining would not be significant. The visual character of the site would remain as a quarry and view changes resulting from proposed continuation of mining would not be significant.

With retention of the existing 200-foot wide naturally vegetated buffer along the shoreline and the approximately 300-foot wide naturally vegetated buffer between the southern boundary of the site and the quarry, views to the site would not substantially change from existing conditions. Views to the site from boats on Mats Mats Bay to the west would primarily consist of the vegetated shoreline buffer and views to the site would not be significantly affected. As the depth of mining increases, views of active quarry activity from areas of higher elevation along and above Oak Bay Road to the west would be of a deeper quarry. However, the overall character of the view from these higher elevation areas would not change.

3.8.3 Impacts of the Alternatives

No Action

Under the *No Action Alternative*, mining conditions on the site would continue consistent with existing surface mining and reclamation permits. It is anticipated that mining activities would continue until approximately 2005 and site reclamation would be completed by approximately 2007. Land use impacts related to mining under this alternative would be similar to those under

the *Proposed Action*, but would end approximately 18 years earlier. The underlying Comprehensive Plan and zoning designations would control future development of the reclaimed site. The site currently carries an underlying zoning designation of RR-5, primarily allowing rural residential development at a maximum of 1 dwelling unit per five acres. Residential development could be initiated on the site by approximately 2007.

Limited Mining

Under the *Limited Mining Alternative*, the transfer and update of the reclamation permit would occur as under the Proposal. However, this alternative would include an increased mining depth to 30 feet below mean lower-low water level (MLLW) compared to 60 feet below MLLW under the Proposal. Mining activities under this alternative would remove less material (approximately 4 million tons compared to approximately 8 million tons under the *Proposed Action*) and occur over a shorter period of time than under the Proposal. It is anticipated that mining would continue for approximately 8 to 10 years, depending on market conditions. It is anticipated that mining activities would continue until approximately 2013 and reclamation would be completed by approximately 2015. Land use impacts related to mining under this alternative would be similar to those under the *Proposed Action*, but would end approximately 10 years earlier. Residential development could be initiated on the site by approximately 2015.

3.8.4 Mitigation Measures

- A 200-foot wide naturally vegetated buffer would be retained around the shoreline perimeter of the site and a 300-foot wide buffer would be provided between the southern site boundary and the quarry to buffer vicinity residential uses and views from the mining activity.
- All outdoor and security lights would be shielded with top clad plates and would be focused downward to avoid glare onto surrounding areas.
- Mitigation measures related to impacts from noise, air quality and transportation conditions are identified in the *Noise, Air and Transportation* sections respectively.

3.8.5 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

Land use impacts related to mining activity would be extended by approximately 18 years.